

Message Text

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TO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 016034

EXDIS MILITARY ADDRESSE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT TOKYO 1008 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BANGKOK
KUALA LUMPUR JAKARTA SINGAPORE MANILA DTG O R 221000Z JAN 76

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 1008

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, ASEAN, JA US

SUBJ: JAPANESE INITIATIVE WITH ASEAN: PM MIKI TO THE
ASEAN SUMMIT?

SUMMARY: VICE FONMIN YOSHINO REVEALED CONFIDENTIALLY
TO CHARGE THAT GOJ HAS APPROACHED SOME ASEAN GOVERN-
MENTS PROPOSNG GOJ PRIMIE MINISTER PARTICIPATION IN INFORMAL
CONSULTATIONS, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ASEAN SUMMIT
SCHEDULED IN BALI FEB 23-24. JAPANESE ALSO
PROPOSED INVITATIONS TO AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND
PRIME MINISTERS. YOSHINO NOTED THAT DURING
EXPLORATION OF THIS CONCEPT CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN
TO INCLUDING THE US AND EEC ALSO IN THE CONSULTATIONS
AN SOUGHT USG REACTION TO THESE PROPOSALS. OBVIOUSLY
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STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY PM MIKI, THIS INITIATIVE REPRESENTS

ONE OF VERY FEW JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES
SINCE WWII. WE SEE SOME ADVANTAGE IN GOJ PARTICIPATION
IF ASEAN GOVERNMENTS AGREE TO INVITATIONS TO JAPAN
AND OTHERS, BUT DO NOT THINK US SHOULD PARTICIPATE AT THIS
STAGE IN THIS PROJECT. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FORECONOMIC AFFAIRS
YOSHINO, ON CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, PROVIDED CHARGE
ON JANUARY 22 WITH EXPLANATION OF BACKGROUND TO PRESS
REPORTS THAT PM MIKI MIGHT ATTEND THE ASEAN SUMMIT
IN BALI. YOSHINO INDICATED THAT IN FACT GOJ HAD
TAKEN INITIATIVE IN ENCOURAGING SOME CLOSER ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN ASEAN AND ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES OF
REGION WITH A VIEW TO STRENGTHENING "POLITICAL
STABILITY" AND SENSE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AMONG ASEAN
COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT HE HAD FIRST BROACHED THIS
IDEA DIRECTLY WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW
IN DECEMBER OF 1975. LEE HAD BEEN RECEPTIVE TO
IDEA, BUT DID NOT FEEL HE COULD TAKE INITIATIVE IN
PROMOTING IT. SUBSEQUENTLY, THEREFORE, GOJ APPARENTLY
UNDERTOOK IT. INFORMAL SOUNDINGS WITH THAILAND, PHILIPPINES
AND INDONESIA, MEETING ENCOURAGING RESPONSE. GOJ
HAS NOT YET SEEMED TO THINK GOA AT LEAST WOULD WELCOME
ASEAN INVITATION IF FORTHCOMING. YOSHINO WAS
SOMEWHAT DISCONCERTED BY WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS PREMATURE
SURFACING IN KUALA LUMPUR OF THIS POSSIBILITY (HE
SAID THAT GOJ HAD NOT YET APPROACHED GOM) AND
STRESSED IMPORTANCE THAT INITIATIVE IN THIS MATTER
BE SEEN AS COMING FROM ASEAN COUNTRIES AND NOT JAPAN.
ALTHOUGH FINAL DECISION NOT TAKEN BY ASEAN COUNTRIES
TO INVITE PRIME MINISTERS OF JAPAN, AUSTRALIA AND
NEW ZEALAND FOR INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS FOLLOWING
ASEAN SUMMIT, YOSHINO SEEMED HOPEFUL THAT IT WOULD
MATERIALIZE. HE IS LEAVING JANUARY 23 FOR JAKARTA
AND MANILA TO SEEK ACTIVE SUPPORT OF THESE GOVERN-
MENTS.

2. YOSHINO STATED THAT IN COURSE OF EXPLORATION
OF THIS CONCEPT, SOME CONSIDERATION HAD BEEN GIVEN
TO INCLUDING U.S. AND EC IN GROUP OF ADVANCED
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INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES. ALTHOUGH NOT SPECIFIC AS
TO DETAILS, YOSHINO INDICATED THAT THINKING TO
DATE HAS BEEN THAT ASSOCIATION WOULD BE INFORMAL,
POSSIBLY INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE
ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES AS OBSERVERS AT ASEAN
MEETINGS AND ON OCCASION PROVIDING FOR EXCHANGES
OF VIEWS AT SUMMIT LEVEL, FOLLOWING PATTERN NOW
BEING EXPLORED FOR BALI MEETING. YOSHINO SAID HE

WISHED U.S. TO BE ACQUAINTED WITH GOJ INTEREST IN THIS DEVELOPMENT BUT HOPED WE WOULD HOLD CLOSELY ROLE WHICH GOJ HAS BEEN PLAYING THUS FAR. HE WOULD PARTICULARLY APPRECIATE HAVING OUR REACTIONS TO CONCEPT OF ENCOURAGING CLOSER ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ASEAN AND ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES AND IN PARTICULAR, WHETHER US WOULD BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A GROUPING. YOSHINO SAID HE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY SUGGESTIONS WE MIGHT HAVE CONCERNING FURTHER EFFORTS BY GOJ TO PROMOTE THIS IDEA.

3. IT WAS CLEAR FROM SEVERAL REMARKS WHICH YOSHINO MADE THAT THIS EFFORT HAS STRONG SUPPORT OF PRIME MINISTER MIKI WHO, YOSHINO ACKNOWLEDGED, MIGHT EXPECT TO GAIN SOME DOMESTIC POLITICAL MILEAGE SHOULD IT BEAR FRUIT. YOSHINO ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MIKI MIGHT FACE SOME DIFFICULTY DURING DIET SESSION. HE EVIDENTLY DID NOT CONSIDER THIS AN INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLE TO MIKI'S ATTENDANCE, HOWEVER, AND SUGGESTED THAT ADJUSTMENTS MIGHT BE MADE IN SCHEDULE FOR DIET CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET. FINALLY, YOSHINO ANTICIPATED POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH CLOSER ASSOCIATION WITH ASEAN MIGHT PROMPT MORE INSISTENT DEMANDS FOR GOJ ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND-OR TRADE CONCESSIONS. HE FEELS, HOWEVER, THAT PRESSURES TO THIS EFFECT CAN BE EXPECTED TO INCREASE IN ANY EVENT, AND THAT JAPAN MUST BE RESPONSIVE IF IT EXPECTS TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN ENCOURAGING GREATER POLITICAL STABILITY IN THE REGION.

4. ALTHOUGH JAPANESE PRESS HAS NOT REPORTED THE GOJ INITIATIVE IN TRYING TO OBTAIN INVITATIONS FOR MIKI, ASHAI JAN 22 COMMENTED ON REPORT FROM KUALA LUMPUR THAT MINISTER MIKI, WAS WELL AS AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER FRASER
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AND NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER MULDOON, MIGHT JOIN ASEAN LEADERS IN ONE-DAY POST SUMMIT CONSULTATIONS. ARTICLE CITES FUMIN MIYAZAWA AS SAYING INVITATIONS WOULD BE WELCOME BUT THAT NONE HAD YET BEEN RECEIVED. ARTICLE ALSO DISCUSSES THE PARLIAMENTARY PROBLEMS AND QUESTIONS OF INCREASED ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO ASEAN BY JAPAN ALONG LINES FOLLOWED BY YOSHINO WITH CHARGE.

5. EMBOFF ASKED SINGAPORE POLICEMAN OFF-HANDEDLY ABOUT PRESS REPORTS AND WAS TOLD THAT VICE FUMIN YOSHINO RAISED THE SUBJECT OF JOINT ASEAN-JAPAN SUMMIT WITH BOTH LEE KUAN YEW AND SINGAPORE FUMIN RAJARATNAM IN DEC. LEE AND RAJARATNAM MADE APPROPRIATELY RECEPTIVE RESPONSES IN PRINCIPLE

BUT INDICATED THAT SUCH A SUMMIT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN FOLLOWING ADEQUATE PREPARATION AND ONLY AFTER THE ASEAN SUMMIT. SINGAPOREANS SAID THAT GOS COULD NOT SHEPHERD THE PROPOSAL ALONE AND SUGGESTED THAT GON CONTACT OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS.

6. COMMENT: THESE EFFORTS, REPRESENTING ONE OF THE VERY FEW FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES BY GOJ SINCE WWII, REFLECT PRIME MINISTER MIKI'S DETERMINATION FOR JAPAN TO STRENGTHEN ITS POLITICAL ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, A THEME ENUNCIATED BY MIKI INSIDER, MASAO KUNIHIRO, RECENTLY TO EMBOFF (TOKYO 932). THE JAPANESE OBVIOUSLY WANT TO HEAR OUR VIEWS.

7. WHILE WE ARE CONCERNED THAT GOJ PARTICIPATION MIGHT BE CONSTRUED BY ASEAN COUNTRIES OR OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE AND AS PART OF POWER PLAY BY INDUSTRIALIZED WEST, WE ASSUME THAT ASEAN COUNTRIES EVEN MORE SENSITIVE THAN WE ON THIS POINT AND WILL NOT INVITE MIKI IF THEY DO NOT WANT HIM. BASICALLY JAPANESE INITIATIVE IS COMPATIBLE WITH OUR OWN INTERESTS, AND WE THINK US SHOULD SUPPORT IT IF ASEAN'S DO.

8. THE US HAS NOTHING TO GAIN BY JOINING AT THIS POINT. ANY FEARS IN AREA THAT SOME SORT OF ANTI-INDOCHINA BLOC BEING FORMED WOULD BE CONFIRMED BY OUR PRESENCE. WE SHOULD DECLINE.
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9. EMBASSY RECOMMENDATION: BEARING ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, WE RECOMMEND US TAKE FOLLOWING POSITION WITH JAPAN: JAPANESE DESIRE TO FOSTER POLITICAL STABILITY IN SE ASIA IDENTICAL TO US OBJECTIVES IN AREA AS OUTLINED IN PRESIDENT'S PACIFIC DOCTRINE SPEECH. IF THE SE ASIAN COUNTRIES EXTEND AN INVITATION TO PRIME MINISTER MIKI, AND OTHERS, THE US COULD SEE BENEFITS IN HIS ATTENDANCE. HOWEVER, WE SEE NO ADVANTAGE AT THIS STAGE IN AMERICAN PARTICIPATION.

10. (WE WILL VERY MUCH APPRECIATE ADDRESSEES STRICTLY PROTECTING INFORMATION YOSHINO PROVIDED US.)

11. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO CINCPAC FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB AND AMBASSADOR HODGSON.
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